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UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL
(Small Entity)

(Only for new nonprovisional applications under 37 CFR 1.53(b))

Docket No.
0111084/024Total Pages in this Submission
90**TO THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS**Box Patent Application
Washington, D.C. 20231

Transmitted herewith for filing under 35 U.S.C. 111(a) and 37 C.F.R. 1.53(b) is a new utility patent application for an invention entitled:

APPARATUS FOR DETECTING LEAKS IN A PRESSURIZED AIR CONDITIONING OR REFRIGERATION SYSTEM

and invented by:

Phil Trigianijc678 U.S. PTO
09/557831
04/26/00If a **CONTINUATION APPLICATION**, check appropriate box and supply the requisite information:☐ Continuation ☐ Divisional ☒ Continuation-in-part (CIP) of prior application No.: 09/535,368

Which is a:

☐ Continuation ☐ Divisional ☐ Continuation-in-part (CIP) of prior application No.:

Which is a:

☐ Continuation ☐ Divisional ☐ Continuation-in-part (CIP) of prior application No.:

Enclosed are:

Application Elements

1. ☒ Filing fee as calculated and transmitted as described below
2. ☒ Specification having 27 pages and including the following:
 - a. ☒ Descriptive Title of the Invention
 - b. ☒ Cross References to Related Applications (if applicable)
 - c. ☐ Statement Regarding Federally-sponsored Research/Development (if applicable)
 - d. ☐ Reference to Microfiche Appendix (if applicable)
 - e. ☒ Background of the Invention
 - f. ☒ Brief Summary of the Invention
 - g. ☒ Brief Description of the Drawings (if drawings filed)
 - h. ☒ Detailed Description
 - i. ☒ Claim(s) as Classified Below
 - j. ☒ Abstract of the Disclosure

UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL
(Small Entity)

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90

Application Elements (Continued)

3. ☒ Drawing(s) *(when necessary as prescribed by 35 USC 113)*
a. ☐ Formal b. ☒ Informal Number of Sheets 19
4. ☒ Oath or Declaration
a. ☒ Newly executed *(original or copy)* ☐ Unexecuted
b. ☐ Copy from a prior application (37 CFR 1.63(d)) *(for continuation/divisional application only)*
c. ☒ With Power of Attorney ☐ Without Power of Attorney
d. ☐ DELETION OF INVENTOR(S)
Signed statement attached deleting inventor(s) named in the prior application,
see 37 C.F.R. 1.63(d)(2) and 1.33(b).
5. ☐ Incorporation By Reference *(usable if Box 4b is checked)*
The entire disclosure of the prior application, from which a copy of the oath or declaration is supplied
under Box 4b, is considered as being part of the disclosure of the accompanying application and is hereby
incorporated by reference therein.
6. ☐ Computer Program in Microfiche
7. ☐ Genetic Sequence Submission *(if applicable, all must be included)*
a. ☐ Paper Copy
b. ☐ Computer Readable Copy
c. ☐ Statement Verifying Identical Paper and Computer Readable Copy

Accompanying Application Parts

8. ☒ Assignment Papers *(cover sheet & documents)*
9. ☒ 37 CFR 3.73(b) Statement *(when there is an assignee)*
10. ☐ English Translation Document *(if applicable)*
11. ☒ Information Disclosure Statement/PTO-1449 ☒ Copies of IDS Citations
12. ☐ Preliminary Amendment
13. ☒ Acknowledgment postcard
14. ☒ Certificate of Mailing
☐ First Class ☒ Express Mail *(Specify Label No.):* EL 132 990 321 US

UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL
(Small Entity)

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Accompanying Application Parts (Continued)

15. ☐ Certified Copy of Priority Document(s) *(if foreign priority is claimed)*
16. ☒ Small Entity Statement(s) - Specify Number of Statements Submitted: 2
17. ☐ Additional Enclosures *(please identify below)*:

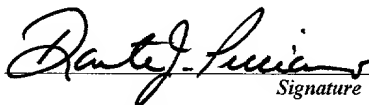
Fee Calculation and Transmittal

CLAIMS AS FILED

For	#Filed	#Allowed	#Extra	Rate	Fee
Total Claims	12	- 20 =	0	x \$9.00	\$0.00
Indep. Claims	1	- 3 =	0	x \$39.00	\$0.00
Multiple Dependent Claims (check if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/>					\$0.00
BASIC FEE					\$345.00
OTHER FEE (specify purpose)					\$0.00
TOTAL FILING FEE					\$345.00

- ☒ A check in the amount of **\$385.00** to cover the filing fee is enclosed.
- ☒ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge and credit Deposit Account No. **02-1818** as described below. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.
- ☐ Charge the amount of _____ as filing fee.
- ☒ Credit any overpayment.
- ☒ Charge any additional filing fees required under 37 C.F.R. 1.16 and 1.17.
- ☐ Charge the issue fee set in 37 C.F.R. 1.18 at the mailing of the Notice of Allowance, pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.311(b).

Dated: April 26, 2000


Dante J. Picciano
Reg. No. 33,543

CC:

**VERIFIED STATEMENT (DECLARATION) CLAIMING SMALL ENTITY
STATUS (37 CFR 1.9(f) AND 1.27 (b)) - INDEPENDENT INVENTOR**

Docket No.
0111084/024

Serial No.

Filing Date

Patent No.

Issue Date

-

-

-

-

Applicant/ **Phil Trigiani**
Patentee:

Invention:

**APPARATUS FOR DETECTING LEAKS IN A PRESSURIZED AIR CONDITIONING OR
REFRIGERATION SYSTEM**

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that I qualify as an independent inventor as defined in 37 CFR 1.9(c) for purposes of paying reduced fees under section 41(a) and (b) of Title 35, United States Code, to the Patent and Trademark Office with regard to the invention entitled above and described in:

- ☒ the specification to be filed herewith.
☐ the application identified above.
☐ the patent identified above.

I have not assigned, granted, conveyed or licensed and am under no obligation under contract or law to assign, grant, convey or license, any rights in the invention to any person who could not be classified as an independent inventor under 37 CFR 1.9(c) if that person had made the invention, or to any concern which would not qualify as a small business concern under 37 CFR 1.9(d) or a nonprofit organization under 37 CFR 1.9(e).

Each person, concern or organization to which I have assigned, granted, conveyed, or licensed or am under an obligation under contract or law to assign, grant, convey, or license any rights in the invention is listed below:

- ☐ No such person, concern or organization exists.
☒ Each such person, concern or organization is listed below.

*NOTE: Separate verified statements are required from each named person, concern or organization having rights to the invention averring to their status as small entities (37 CFR 1.27)

FULL NAME **UView Ultraviolet Systems, Inc.**

ADDRESS **1324 Blundell Road, Mississauga, Ontario L4Y 1M5, Canada**
☐ Individual ☒ Small Business Concern ☐ Nonprofit Organization

FULL NAME

ADDRESS

☐ Individual ☐ Small Business Concern ☐ Nonprofit Organization

FULL NAME

ADDRESS

☐ Individual ☐ Small Business Concern ☐ Nonprofit Organization

FULL NAME

ADDRESS

☐ Individual ☐ Small Business Concern ☐ Nonprofit Organization

I acknowledge the duty to file, in this application or patent, notification of any change in status resulting in loss of entitlement to small entity status prior to paying, or at the time of paying, the earliest of the issue fee or any maintenance fee due after the date on which status as a small entity is no longer appropriate. (37 CFR 1.28(b))

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application, any patent issuing thereon, or any patent to which this verified statement is directed.

NAME OF INVENTOR Phil Trigiani

SIGNATURE OF INVENTOR 

DATE: April 24, 2006

NAME OF INVENTOR _____

SIGNATURE OF INVENTOR _____

DATE: _____

NAME OF INVENTOR _____

SIGNATURE OF INVENTOR _____

DATE: _____

NAME OF INVENTOR _____

SIGNATURE OF INVENTOR _____

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NAME OF INVENTOR _____

SIGNATURE OF INVENTOR _____

DATE: _____

**VERIFIED STATEMENT (DECLARATION) CLAIMING SMALL ENTITY
STATUS (37 CFR 1.9(f) AND 1.27 (c)) - SMALL BUSINESS CONCERN**

Docket No.
0111084/024

Serial No.

Filing Date

Patent No.

Issue Date

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-

Applicant/ **Phil Trigiani**
Patentee:

Invention:

**APPARATUS FOR DETECTING LEAKS IN A PRESSURIZED AIR CONDITIONING OR
REFRIGERATION SYSTEM**

I hereby declare that I am:

- ☐ the owner of the small business concern identified below:
☒ an official of the small business concern empowered to act on behalf of the concern identified below:

NAME OF CONCERN: **UView Ultraviolet Systems, Inc.**ADDRESS OF CONCERN: **1324 Blundell Road, Mississauga, Ontario L4Y 1M5**

I hereby declare that the above-identified small business concern qualifies as a small business concern as defined in 37 CFR 121.3-18, and reproduced in 37 CFR 1.9(d), for purposes of paying reduced fees under Section 41(a) and (b) of Title 35, United States Code, in that the number of employees of the concern, including those of its affiliates, does not exceed 500 persons. For purposes of this statement, (1) the number of employees of the business concern is the average over the previous fiscal year of the concern of the persons employed on a full-time, part-time or temporary basis during each of the pay periods of the fiscal year, and (2) concerns are affiliates of each other when either, directly or indirectly, one concern controls or has the power to control the other, or a third party or parties controls or has the power to control both.

I hereby declare that rights under contract or law have been conveyed to and remain with the small business concern identified above with regard to the above identified invention described in:

- ☒ the specification filed herewith with title as listed above.
☐ the application identified above.
☐ the patent identified above.

If the rights held by the above-identified small business concern are not exclusive, each individual, concern or organization having rights to the invention is listed on the next page and no rights to the invention are held by any person, other than the inventor, who could not qualify as an independent inventor under 37 CFR 1.9(c) or by any concern which would not qualify as a small business concern under 37 CFR 1.9(d) or a nonprofit organization under 37 CFR 1.9(e).

Each person, concern or organization to which I have assigned, granted, conveyed, or licensed or am under an obligation under contract or law to assign, grant, convey, or license any rights in the invention is listed below:

- ☒ no such person, concern or organization exists.
☐ each such person, concern or organization is listed below.

FULL NAME

ADDRESS

☐ Individual ☐ Small Business Concern ☐ Nonprofit Organization

FULL NAME

ADDRESS

☐ Individual ☐ Small Business Concern ☐ Nonprofit Organization

FULL NAME

ADDRESS

☐ Individual ☐ Small Business Concern ☐ Nonprofit Organization

FULL NAME

ADDRESS

☐ Individual ☐ Small Business Concern ☐ Nonprofit Organization

Separate verified statements are required from each named person, concern or organization having rights to the invention averring to their status as small entities. (37 CFR 1.27)

I acknowledge the duty to file, in this application or patent, notification of any change in status resulting in loss of entitlement to small entity status prior to paying, or at the time of paying, the earliest of the issue fee or any maintenance fee due after the date on which status as a small entity is no longer appropriate. (37 CFR 1.28(b))

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application, any patent issuing thereon, or any patent to which this verified statement is directed.

NAME OF PERSON SIGNING:

Phil Trigiani

TITLE OF PERSON SIGNING

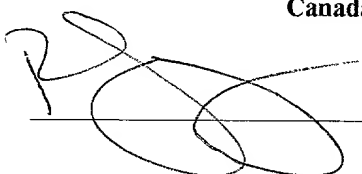
OTHER THAN OWNER:

Chief Executive Officer

ADDRESS OF PERSON SIGNING:

UView Ultraviolet Systems, Inc.1324 Blundell RoadMississauga, Ontario L4Y 1M5Canada

SIGNATURE:



DATE:

April 24, 2000

APPARATUS FOR DETECTING LEAKS IN A PRESSURIZED AIR CONDITIONING OR REFRIGERATION SYSTEM

This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Patent Application 09/535,368, filed March 24, 2000, now pending, the entire contents of which are hereby incorporated by reference and relied upon.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

The instant invention relates generally to the field of pressurized fluid systems and more specifically it relates to an apparatus for detecting leaks in a pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system. The purpose of the apparatus is to provide the technician with a simple method of injecting a predetermined amount of a secondary fluid, e.g., a fluorescent dye, and/or lubricant into a pressurized system.

Description of the Prior Art

Numerous pressurized fluid systems have been provided in the prior art that are adapted to operate optimally within a certain pressure range. If the internal pressure falls below this range, the system needs to be recharged with an appropriate lubricant. While these units may be suitable for the particular purpose to which they address, they would not be as suitable for the purposes of the present invention as heretofore described.

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There does not presently exist a cost effective way to accomplish the task of inserting a predetermined amount of lubricant into a pressurized system.

Added to this, is the fact that when a technician arrives on site they are faced with a myriad number of systems with service connection access ranging from the accessible to the acrobatic and often cramped working conditions.

Some systems contain a combination of fluids. For example, air conditioning and refrigeration systems generally contain a refrigerant (the primary fluid) in combination with a lubricating oil (the secondary fluid) for the compressor and other critical components. The lubricating oil is generally present in fairly low quantities, usually less than 5% of the total fluid. The present invention provides for the introduction of these and other secondary fluids into air conditioning or refrigeration systems charged with the primary fluids in order to detect leaks in the pressurized systems.

Furthermore, air conditioning or refrigeration system leaks are difficult to locate because refrigerants are generally odorless and colorless gases. The present invention provides for a device and method for injecting a small amount of a concentrated fluorescent additive or dye into the system, thereby making the leaks easier to find. The fluorescent dye can be injected into the system with the present device or they can be placed in the systems at the original equipment manufacturing facility prior to the system being put into service. These air conditioning and refrigeration systems are closed loop recirculating systems and the secondary fluid is a lubricant that also travels throughout the system while in

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operation. The dye will travel throughout the system and leak out with the refrigerant. The dye will leave a stain that can be further enhanced with the use of an ultraviolet (UV) lamp. The UV wavelength of light will excite the dye allowing the operator to more easily identify the exact location of the leak. The device can also be used to add the appropriate lubricant to the air conditioning or refrigeration system without stopping the system and without any special equipment.

A cartridge that is at or about atmospheric pressure while not in use contains the concentrated fluorescent dye and/or lubricant. The cartridge is connected to the device of the present invention in a way that will raise the pressure of the dye above that of the operating system. The connection between the device and the operating system must be airtight. The connection can be a quick coupler, thread or other means of positive, sealed connection.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The preferred embodiment of the present invention is for an apparatus for detecting leaks in a pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system and includes an injection device with a receptacle portion for receiving a disposable or reusable lubricant canister and a connector assembly for attaching the lubricant canister to the pressurized system. The lubricant canister contains lubricant and/or fluorescent dye. It is a further aim of the present invention not to limit the mechanical means of lubricant and/or fluorescent dye delivery just to hand

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pressure, but to provide other embodiments using various types of hand tools and structures to accomplish the delivery of the lubricant and/or fluorescent dye to the pressurized system.

More specifically, the present invention is for an apparatus for detecting leaks in a pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system, comprising a canister containing a secondary fluid, where the secondary fluid comprises a fluorescent dye; means for fluidly coupling the canister to the pressurized system; and means for forcing the secondary fluid out of the canister, through the fluidly coupling means and into a service valve of the pressurized system.

In a preferred embodiment, the canister includes a tubular casing for holding the secondary fluid therein; a threaded nozzle integral with and extending out from a first end of the tubular casing to engage with one end of the fluidly coupling means; and a piston inserted within an open second end of the tubular casing to engage with a secondary fluid forcing means.

In a more preferred embodiment, the tubular casing is fabricated out of transparent material and includes a plurality of gradient markings to aid in accurately dispensing a predetermined amount of the secondary fluid therefrom. In another embodiment, the canister further includes a threaded cap, to engage with the threaded nozzle when the canister is not in use, so as to prevent leakage of the secondary fluid through the threaded nozzle.

In another preferred embodiment, the fluidly coupling means is a connector assembly having a first end connected to the threaded nozzle of the

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canister and a second end connected to the service valve of the pressurized system. In a more preferred embodiment, the connector assembly includes a flexible conduit; a thread on the first end of the flexible conduit, to engage with the threaded nozzle of the canister; and a release valve on a second end of the flexible conduit, to engage with the service valve of the pressurized system.

In another preferred embodiment, the connector assembly further includes a one-way check valve at the first end of the flexible conduit, which prevents any material from back flushing into and contaminating the secondary fluid in the canister.

In yet another preferred embodiment, the release valve includes a closeable valve, which prevents any material from back flushing into the flexible conduit from the service valve of the pressurized system, and to allow the release valve to disconnect from the service valve of the pressurized system, to prevent leakage of the secondary fluid therefrom.

In more preferred embodiments, the release valve includes a snap lock fitting to engage with the service valve of the pressurized system or includes a threaded fitting, to engage with the service valve of the pressurized system.

In another more preferred embodiment, the secondary fluid forcing means is an injection device. In yet another more preferred embodiment, the injection device includes a housing having a receptacle portion to receive the canister therein; and a drive mechanism to force the piston into the tubular casing, to cause

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the secondary fluid to exit the threaded nozzle through the fluidly coupling means, past the service valve and into the pressurized system.

In another preferred embodiment, the drive mechanism includes a hand grip integral with and extending downwardly on the housing; a trigger pivotally mounted to the housing adjacent the hand grip; a central drive shaft extending longitudinally through the housing and transversely past a pivotal portion of the trigger; a cylindrical head on an inner end of the central drive shaft, to engage with the piston of the canister; a first pawl spring biased on the central drive shaft forward the pivotal portion of the trigger; and a second pawl spring biased on the central drive shaft rearward the pivotal portion of the trigger, the second pawl having a tongue extending out through a rear wall of the housing above the hand grip, so that when the trigger is squeezed, the first pawl will move into contact with the central drive shaft, to push the central drive shaft forward with the cylindrical head making contact with the piston, while the second pawl prevents reverse movement of the central drive shaft, until the tongue disengages the second pawl, allowing the central drive shaft to be pulled back to a desired position.

In a more preferred embodiment, the drive mechanism includes a hand grip integral with and extending downwardly on the housing; a trigger pivotally mounted to the housing adjacent the hand grip; a central drive shaft extending longitudinally through the housing and transversely above a pivotal portion of the trigger, the central drive shaft having a plurality of teeth extending therealong; a

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cylindrical head on an inner end of the central drive shaft, to engage with the piston of the canister; and a pawl pivotally mounted between the pivotal portion of the trigger and the housing, so that when the trigger is squeezed, the pawl will move into contact with the teeth on the central drive shaft, to push the central drive shaft forward with the cylindrical head making contact with the piston.

In another more preferred embodiment, the drive mechanism includes a second pawl spring biased in the housing to make contact with the teeth on the central drive shaft forward the first pawl, to prevent reverse movement of the central drive shaft.

In yet another more preferred embodiment, the drive mechanism includes a stationary nut mounted vertically within a rear wall of the housing; an elongated threaded rod extending longitudinally through the stationary nut; a cylindrical head on an inner end of the elongated threaded rod, to engage with the piston of the canister; and means on an outer end of the elongated threaded rod for rotating the elongated threaded rod through the stationary nut and moving the elongated threaded rod with the cylindrical head forward, to make contact with the piston.

In another preferred embodiments, the rotating means is a bolt head which can be turned by an open end and box wrench, is a socket head which can be turned by a ratchet socket wrench or is a handle rod extending transversely through the outer end of the elongated threaded rod which can be turned by a hand of a person.

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In another preferred embodiment, the drive mechanism includes a rear chamber formed within the housing and having an inlet port to allow compressed gas to enter the rear chamber; a central drive shaft carried longitudinally within the tubular casing of the canister; a cylindrical head on an inner end of the central drive shaft, to engage with the piston; and a transverse drive plate on an outer end of the central drive shaft within the tubular casing adjacent the rear chamber, so that when the compressed gas is introduced through the inlet port into the rear chamber, the transverse drive plate will push the central drive shaft forward with the cylindrical head to make contact with the piston.

The present invention also discloses a canister or cartridge for charging a closed, pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system with a fluid. The cartridge comprises a closed, non-pressurized cylindrical cartridge, where the cartridge has two ends, a first open end and a second open end, where the first open end comprises an inner nozzle which connects to the system being charged and an outer nozzle; a predetermined amount of the fluid; and a piston sealably disposed with the second open end of the cartridge, where the cartridge is adapted to connect sealably and releasably to the pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system to form a closed binary system.

In preferred embodiments of the cartridge, the fluid comprises a lubricant for the air conditioning or refrigeration systems; the fluid comprises a fluid dye for the air conditioning or refrigeration systems; or the fluid comprises a lubricant and a fluid dye for the air conditioning or refrigeration systems.

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In other preferred embodiments of the cartridge, the fluid is maintained in the cartridge at about ambient pressure; and/or the cartridge is fabricated out of transparent material and includes a plurality of gradient markings.

In yet other preferred embodiments of the cartridge, the inner nozzle is surrounded by an internal thread; the outer nozzle is surrounded by an external thread; the outer nozzle comprises a threaded cap for engagement with the external thread; and/or the inner nozzle is surrounded by an internal thread and the outer nozzle is surrounded by an external thread.

In still other preferred embodiments of the cartridge, the piston further comprises an O-ring; or the piston further comprises a recessed double O-ring.

The present invention also discloses a method for detecting leaks in a pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system. The method comprises the steps of charging the pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system with a fluorescent dye with the apparatus of the present invention; inspecting the pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system for leaks of the fluorescent dye from the pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system; and detecting any leaks in the pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system. In a preferred embodiment, the inspecting is done with ultraviolet light.

Thus, a primary object of the present invention is to provide an apparatus for detecting leaks in a pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system that will overcome the shortcomings of the prior art devices.

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Another object is to provide an apparatus for detecting leaks in a pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system that will allow a technician to inject a predetermined amount of lubricant and/or fluorescent dye into the pressurized system.

It is yet a further object of the invention to provide a method and apparatus for charging a pressurized air conditioning/refrigeration line with a lubricant and/or fluorescent dye from a closed, non-pressurized charging cartridge containing a predetermined amount of such lubricant and/or fluorescent dye.

An additional object is to provide an apparatus for detecting leaks in a pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system which can be readily carried to a site, be easily operated, and can deliver a measured amount of lubricant and/or fluorescent dye into the pressurized system.

A further object is to provide an apparatus for detecting leaks in a pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system that is simple and easy to use.

A still further object is to provide an apparatus for detecting leaks in a pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system that is economical in cost to manufacture.

It is yet a further object to present an apparatus and method for detecting leaks in air conditioning or refrigeration systems by injecting a fluorescent dye into the systems and then inspecting the system for leaks of the fluorescent dye from the systems.

Further objects of the invention will appear as the description proceeds.

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To the accomplishment of the above and related objects, this invention may be embodied in the form illustrated in the accompanying drawings, attention being called to the fact, however, that the drawings are illustrative only, and that changes may be made in the specific construction illustrated and described within the scope of the appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING FIGURES

Various other objects, features and attendant advantages of the present invention will become more fully appreciated as the same becomes better understood when considered in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which like reference characters designate the same or similar parts throughout the several views, and wherein;

FIGURE 1 is a side view of a first embodiment of the present invention.

FIGURE 2 is an enlarged side view of the injection device shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 3 is a cross sectional view taken along line 3-3 in Figure 2.

FIGURE 4 is an enlarged side of the lubricant canister in Figure 1.

FIGURE 5 is a cross sectional view taken along line 5-5 in Figure 4.

FIGURE 6 is a side view of the connector assembly in Figure 1.

FIGURE 7 is a top view taken in the direction of arrow 7 in Figure 6.

FIGURE 8 is an end view taken in the direction of arrow 8 in Figure 6.

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FIGURE 9 is a side view of a second embodiment of the connector assembly.

FIGURE 10 is an end view taken in the direction of arrow 10 in Figure 9.

FIGURE 11 is a top view taken in the direction of arrow 11 in Figure 9.

FIGURE 12 a perspective view of a second embodiment of the injection device.

FIGURE 13 is a cross sectional view taken along line 13-13 in Figure 12.

FIGURE 14 is an enlarged cross sectional view of an area in Figure 13 as indicated by arrow 14.

FIGURE 15 is a cross sectional view similar to Figure 13, showing a single pawl mechanism to propel the toothed central shaft in the injection device.

FIGURE 16 is a perspective view of a third embodiment of the injection device.

FIGURE 17 is a cross sectional view taken along line 17-17 in Figure 16.

FIGURE 18 is a perspective view similar to Figure 16, showing a socket wrench to turn the operating screw in the injection device.

FIGURE 19 is a perspective view similar to Figure 18, showing a transverse handle to turn the operating screw in the injection device.

FIGURE 20 is a cross sectional view of a fourth embodiment of the injection device, whereby compressed gas is introduced within a chamber to drive the piston forward in the lubricant canister.

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FIGURES 21A-F show a preferred embodiment of the cartridge of the present invention. FIGURE 21A is a front view of the cartridge. FIGURE 21B is a back view of the cartridge. FIGURES 21C and 21D are the left and right side view, respectively, of the cartridge. FIGURE 21E is a top view and FIGURE 21F is a bottom view of the cartridge.

Similar reference characters denote corresponding features consistently throughout the attached drawings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Turning now descriptively to the drawings, in which similar reference characters denote similar elements throughout the several views, Figure 1 illustrates the present invention being an apparatus 22 for detecting leaks in a pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system 24. With regard to the reference numerals used, the following numbering is used throughout the various drawing figures.

- 22 charging apparatus
- 24 pressurized system
- 26 canister of 22
- 28 fluidly coupling facility of 22
- 30 lubricant or secondary fluid forcing assemblage of 22
- 32 lubricant and/or fluorescent dye of 26
- 33 central nipple or inner nozzle

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- 34 service valve of 24
- 35 internal thread
- 36 tubular casing of 26
- 37 outer nozzle
- 38 threaded nozzle of 26 on 36
- 39 external thread
- 40 piston of 26 in 36
- 42 transparent material for 36
- 44 gradient marking on 36
- 46 threaded cap of 26 on 38
- 47 connector assembly for 28
- 48 flexible conduit of 47
- 50 threaded fitting of 47 on 48
- 52 release valve of 47 on 48
- 54 one-way check valve of 47
- 56 closeable control knob or valve of 52
- 58 snap lock fitting of 52
- 60 threaded fitting of 52
- 62 injection device for 30
- 64 housing of 62
- 66 receptacle portion of 64
- 68 drive mechanism of 30

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- 70 hand grip of 68
- 72 trigger of 68
- 74 central drive shaft of 68
- 76 cylindrical head of 68 on 74
- 78 first pawl of 64
- 80 spring of 78
- 82 second pawl of 64
- 84 spring of 82
- 86 tongue of 82
- 88 teeth on 74
- 90 first pawl pivotally mounted between 72 and 64
- 92 second pawl on 64
- 94 stationary nut of 68
- 96 elongated threaded rod of 68
- 98 rotating structure of 68 on 96
- 100 bolt head for 98
- 102 open end wrench
- 104 socket head for 98
- 106 ratchet socket wrench
- 108 handle rod for 98
- 110 rear chamber of 68 in 64
- 112 inlet port of 110

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114 transverse drive plate of 68

The apparatus 22 for detecting leaks in a pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system 24 comprises a lubricant canister 26. A facility 28 is for fluidly coupling the lubricant canister 26 to the pressurized system 24. An assemblage 30 is for forcing lubricant and/or fluorescent dye 32 out of the lubricant canister 26, through the fluidly coupling facility 28 and into a service valve 34 of the pressurized system 24.

The lubricant canister or cartridge 26, as shown in Figures 1, 4, 5, 13, 14, 15, 17 and 20 includes a tubular casing 36 for holding the lubricant and/or fluorescent dye 32 therein. A threaded nozzle 38 is integral with and extends out from a first end of the tubular casing 36, to engage with one end of the fluidly coupling facility 28. A piston 40 is inserted within an open second end of the tubular casing 36, to engage with the lubricant forcing assemblage 30.

The tubular casing 36 can be fabricated out of transparent material 42 and can include a plurality of gradient markings 44, to aid in accurately dispensing a predetermined amount of the lubricant and/or fluorescent dye 32 therefrom. The lubricant canister 26 further includes a threaded cap 46, as shown in Figures 4 and 5, to engage with the threaded nozzle 38 when the lubricant canister 26 is not in use, so as to prevent leakage of the lubricant and/or fluorescent dye 32 through the threaded nozzle 38.

In a preferred embodiment of the lubricant canister or cartridge 26, as shown in Figure 21, a central nipple or inner nozzle 33 is integral with and

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extends out from the first end of the tubular casing 36, to engage with one end of the fluidly coupling facility 28. The central nipple or inner nozzle 33 is surrounded by an internal thread 35 to facilitate engagement with one end of the fluidly coupling facility 28. The lubricant canister or cartridge 26 further includes an outer nozzle 37 surrounded by an external thread 39 to engage with a threaded cap when the lubricant canister 26 is not in use, so as to prevent leakage of the lubricant and/or fluorescent dye 32 through the threaded nozzle. The external threads 39 are fitted for a drip cap with a standard size.

In practice, the central nipple or inner nozzle 33 can be made to extend slightly beyond the end of the outer nozzle 37. A cap with an induction seal, which seals on the central nipple or inner nozzle 33, can be used. These caps are lined with tinfoil, so that a heated, sealed end results which is able to withstand pressure and which seals directly to the lubricant or dye, if there is any present.

The design of the internal thread 35 allows a threaded check valve to mate with and to force the sealing area down the central nipple or inner nozzle 33. The central nipple 33 is tapered slightly to allow easy installation and sealing with an O-ring on the inside of the check valve of the fluidly coupling facility 28 and seals to the outside circumference of the central nipple. This design results in a very cost effective and quick connect and disconnect mating system. The system has been designed to be one single turn for full connection. The seal that is formed is capable of withstanding very high pressures (300+ psi) with very little operator effort for connecting and disconnecting.

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The external threads 39 allow the operator to cap the device with an airtight seal for disposal or when not in use. The cartridge can be fabricated out of transparent material 42 and can include a plurality of gradient markings 44, to aid in accurately dispensing a predetermined amount of the lubricant and/or fluorescent dye 32 therefrom. The lubricant canister 26 may further include a piston sealed therein. The piston may be made without any O-rings and uses pressure to further seal on the bore.

Furthermore, the design of the fluidly coupling facility 28 and the mating central nipple 33 ensures that only a minimal amount of fluid is left behind when the connection is disengaged. The fluorescent dye is very concentrated and expensive. In some applications, as little as two ml of fluid is injected per air conditioning or refrigeration system being tested so minimizing fluid loss is critical to the effectiveness of the diagnostic method.

The fluidly coupling facility 28, as shown in Figures 1 and 6 through 11, is a connector assembly 47 having a first end connected to the threaded nozzle 38 of the lubricant canister 26 and a second end connected to the service valve 34 of the pressurized system 24. The connector assembly 47 consists of a flexible conduit 48. A threaded fitting 50 is on the first end of the flexible conduit 48, to engage with the threaded nozzle 38 of the lubricant canister 26. A release valve 52 is on the second end of the flexible conduit 48, to engage with the service valve 34 of the pressurized system 24.

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The connector assembly 47 further includes a one-way check valve 54 between the threaded fitting 50 and the first end of the flexible conduit 48, which prevents any material from back flushing into and contaminating the lubricant and/or fluorescent dye 32 in the lubricant canister 26. The release valve 52 contains a closeable control knob or valve 56, which prevents any material from back flushing into the flexible conduit 48 from the service valve 34 of the pressurized system 24, and allows the release valve 52 to disconnect from the service valve 34 of the pressurized system 24, to prevent leakage of the lubricant and/or fluorescent dye 32 therefrom.

The release valve 52 in Figures 1, 6, 7 and 8, includes a snap lock fitting 58 to engage with the service valve 34 of the pressurized system 24. The release valve 52 in Figures 9, 10 and 11, includes a threaded fitting 60, to engage with the service valve 34 of the pressurized system 24.

The lubricant forcing assemblage 30, as shown in Figures 1 to 3 and 12 to 20, is an injection device 62. The injection device 62 contains a housing 64 having a receptacle portion 66, to receive the lubricant canister 26 therein. A drive mechanism 68 forces the O-ring piston 40 into the tubular casing 36, to cause the lubricant and/or fluorescent dye 32 to exit the threaded nozzle 38 through the fluidly coupling facility 28, past the service valve 34 and into the pressurized system 24.

The drive mechanism 68 in Figures 1 to 3 includes a hand grip 70 integral with and extending downwardly on the housing 64. A trigger 72 is pivotally

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mounted to the housing 64 adjacent the handgrip 70. A central drive shaft 74 extends longitudinally through the housing 64 and transversely past a pivotal portion of the trigger 72. A cylindrical head 76 is on an inner end of the central drive shaft 74, to engage with the O-ring piston 40 of the lubricant canister 26.

A first pawl 78 is spring biased at 80 on the central drive shaft 74 forward the pivotal portion of the trigger 72. A second pawl 82 is spring biased at 84 on the central drive shaft 74 rearward the pivotal portion of the trigger 72. The second pawl 82 has a tongue 86 extending out through a rear wall of the housing 64 above the handgrip 70. When the trigger 72 is squeezed the first pawl 78 will move into contact with the central drive shaft 74, to push the central drive shaft 74 forward with the cylindrical head 76 making contact with the recessed O-ring piston 40. The second pawl 82 prevents reverse movement of the central drive shaft 74, until the tongue 86 is lifted up to disengage the second pawl 82, allowing the central drive shaft 74 to be pulled back to a desired position.

The drive mechanism 68 in Figures 12 to 15 includes a hand grip 70 integral with and extending downwardly on the housing 64. A trigger 72 is pivotally mounted to the housing 64 adjacent the handgrip 70. A central drive shaft 74 extends longitudinally through the housing 64 and transversely above a pivotal portion of the trigger 72. The central drive shaft 74 has a plurality of teeth 88 extending therealong. A cylindrical head 76 is on an inner end of the central drive shaft 74, to engage with the O-ring piston 40 of the lubricant canister 26.

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A pawl 90 is pivotally mounted between the pivotal portion of the trigger 72 and the housing 64. When the trigger 72 is squeezed, the pawl 90 will move into contact with the teeth 88 on the central drive shaft 74, to push the central drive shaft 74 forward with the cylindrical head 76 making contact with the O-ring piston 40. As best seen in Figures 13 and 14, the drive mechanism 68 can include a second pawl 92 spring biased in the housing 64 to make contact with the teeth 88 on the central drive shaft 74 forward the first pawl 90, to prevent reverse movement of the central drive shaft 74.

The drive mechanism 68 in Figures 16 to 19 includes a stationary nut 94 mounted vertically within a rear wall of the housing 64. An elongated threaded rod 96 extends longitudinally through the stationary nut 94. A cylindrical head 76 on an inner end of the elongated threaded rod 96 engages with the O-ring piston 40 of the lubricant canister 26. A structure 98 on an outer end of the elongated threaded rod 96 is for rotating the elongated threaded rod 96 through the stationary nut 94 and moves the elongated threaded rod 96 with the cylindrical head 76 forward, to make contact with the O-ring piston 40.

The rotating structure 98 in Figures 16 and 17 is a bolt head 100, which can be turned by an open end or box wrench 102. The rotating structure 98 in Figure 18 is a socket head 104, which can be turned by a ratchet socket wrench 106. The rotating structure 98 in Figure 19 is a handle rod 108 extending transversely through the outer end of the elongated threaded rod 96, which can be turned by a hand of a person.

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The drive mechanism 68, shown in Figure 20, includes a rear chamber 110 formed within the housing 64 and has an inlet port 112 to allow compressed gas to enter the rear chamber 110. A central drive shaft 74 is carried longitudinally within the tubular casing 36 of the lubricant canister 26. A cylindrical head 76 is on an inner end of the central drive shaft 74 to engage with the O-ring piston 40. A transverse drive plate 114 is on an outer end of the central drive shaft 74 within the tubular casing 36 adjacent the rear chamber 110. When the compressed gas is introduced through the inlet port 112 into the rear chamber 110, the transverse drive plate 114 will push the central drive shaft 74 forward with the cylindrical head 76, to make contact with the O-ring piston 40.

Thus, the present invention provides for a device and method for injecting a small amount of a concentrated fluorescent additive or dye into the system, thereby making any leaks easier to find. The fluorescent dye can be injected into the system with the present device or they can be placed in the systems at the original equipment manufacturing facility prior to the system being put into service. These air conditioning and refrigeration systems are closed loop recirculating systems and the secondary fluid is a lubricant that also travels throughout the system while in operation. The dye will travel throughout the system and leak out with the refrigerant. The dye will leave a stain that can be further enhanced with the use of an ultraviolet (UV) lamp. The UV wavelength of light will excite the dye allowing the operator to more easily identify the exact location of the leak. The device can also be used to add the appropriate lubricant

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to the air conditioning or refrigeration system without stopping the system and without any special equipment.

Finally, a cartridge that is at or about atmospheric pressure while not in use contains the concentrated fluorescent dye and/or lubricant. The cartridge is connected to the device of the present invention in a way that will raise the pressure of the dye above that of the operating system. The connection between the device and the operating system must be airtight. The connection can be a quick coupler, thread or other means of positive, sealed connection.

It will be understood that each of the elements described above, or two or more together may also find a useful application in other types of methods differing from the type describe above.

While certain novel features of this invention have been shown and described are pointed out in the annexed claims, it is not intended to be limited to the details above, since it will be understood that various omissions, modifications, substitutions and changes in the forms and details of the device illustrated and in its operation can be made by those skilled in the art without departing in any way from the spirit of the present invention.

Without further analysis, the foregoing will so fully reveal the gist of the present invention that others can, by applying current knowledge, readily adapt it for various applications without omitting features that, from the standpoint of prior art, fairly constitute essential characteristics of the generic or specific aspects of this invention.

CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A cartridge for charging a closed, pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system with a fluid, comprising:
 - a) a closed, non-pressurized cylindrical cartridge, wherein the cartridge has two ends, a first open end and a second open end, wherein the first open end comprises an inner nozzle which connects to the system being charged and an outer nozzle;
 - b) a predetermined amount of the fluid; and
 - c) a piston sealably disposed with the second open end of the cartridge, wherein the cartridge is adapted to connect sealably and releasably to the pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system to form a closed binary system.
2. The cartridge of claim 1, wherein the fluid comprises a lubricant for the air conditioning or refrigeration system.
3. The cartridge of claim 1, wherein the fluid comprises a fluid dye for the air conditioning or refrigeration system.

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4. The cartridge of claim 1, wherein the fluid comprises a lubricant and a fluid dye for the air conditioning or refrigeration system.

5. The cartridge of claim 1, wherein the fluid is maintained in the cartridge at about ambient pressure.

6. The cartridge of claim 1, wherein the cartridge is fabricated out of transparent material and includes a plurality of gradient markings.

7. The cartridge of claim 1, wherein the inner nozzle is surrounded by an internal thread.

8. The cartridge of claim 1, wherein the outer nozzle is surrounded by an external thread.

9. The cartridge of claim 8, wherein the outer nozzle comprises a threaded cap for engagement with the external thread.

10. The cartridge of claim 1, wherein the inner nozzle is surrounded by an internal thread and wherein the outer nozzle is surrounded by an external thread.

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11. The cartridge of claim 1, wherein the piston further comprises an O-ring.

12. The cartridge of claim 1, wherein the piston further comprises a recessed double O-ring.

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ABSTRACT

An apparatus (22) and method for detecting leaks in a pressurized air conditioning or refrigeration system (24) comprising a cartridge (26) is described. A facility (28) is for fluidly coupling the cartridge (26) to the pressurized system (24). An assemblage (30) is for forcing a secondary fluid (32) out of the cartridge (26), through the fluidly coupling facility (28) and into a service valve (34) of the pressurized system (24). The cartridge (26) has a first open end with an inner nozzle (33) which connects to the system being charged and an outer nozzle (37).

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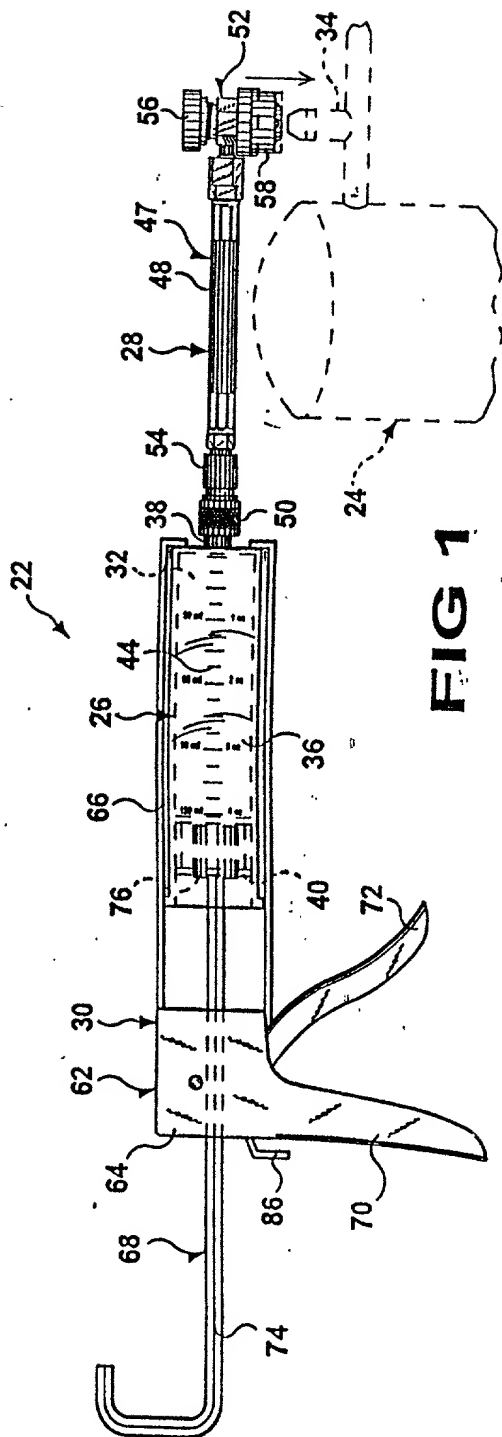


FIG 1

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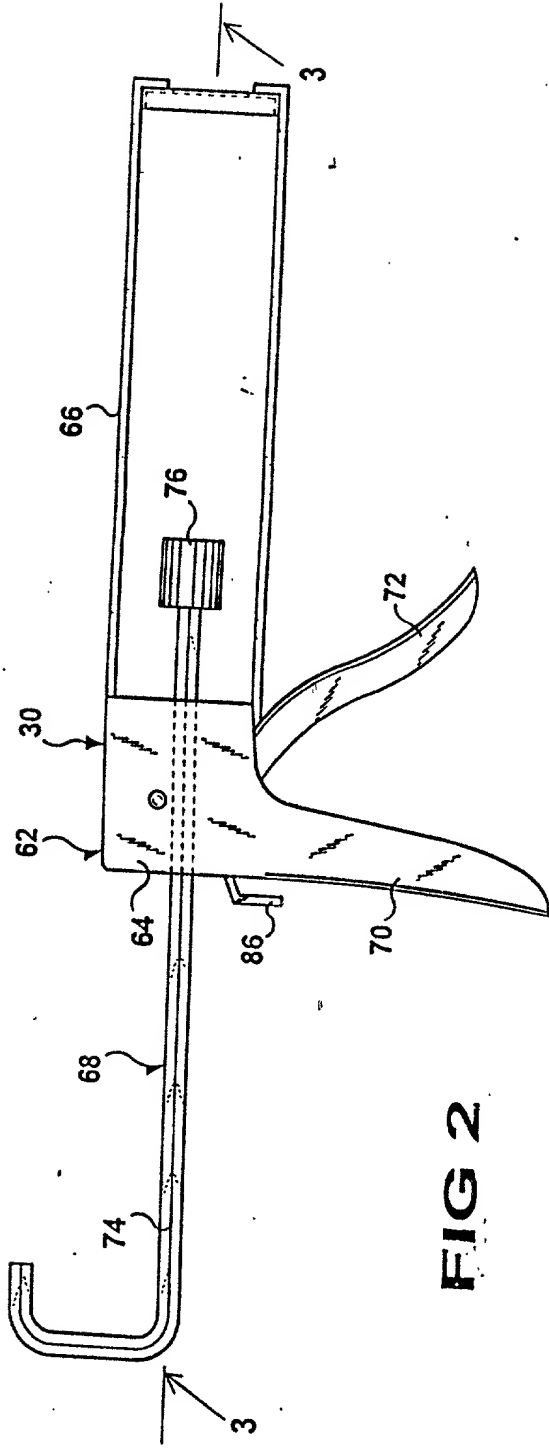


FIG 2

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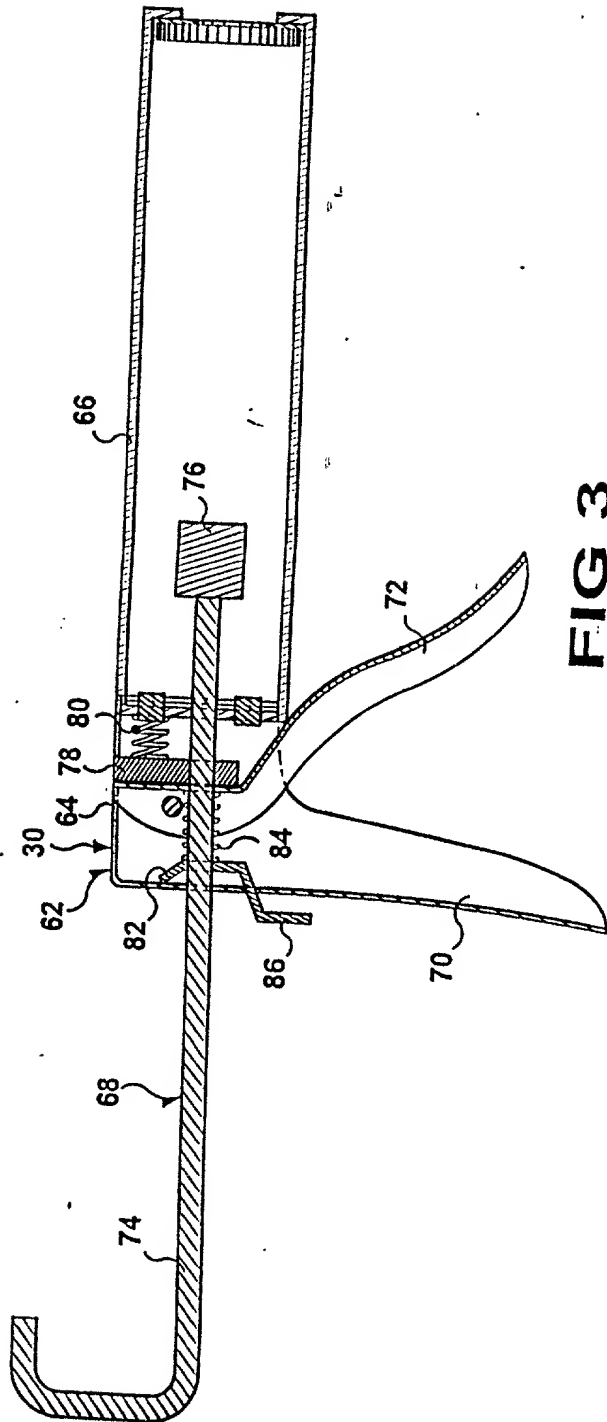


FIG 3

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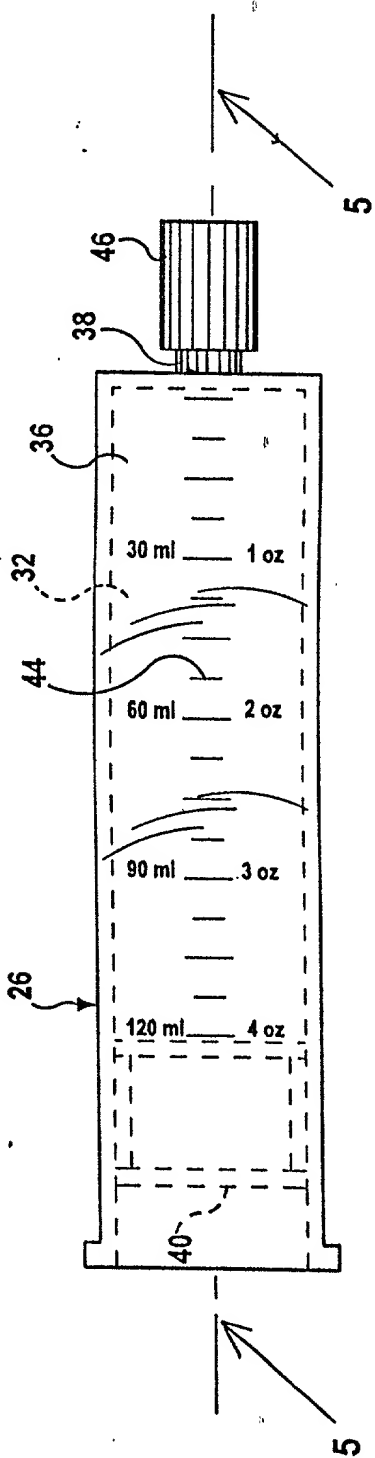


FIG 4

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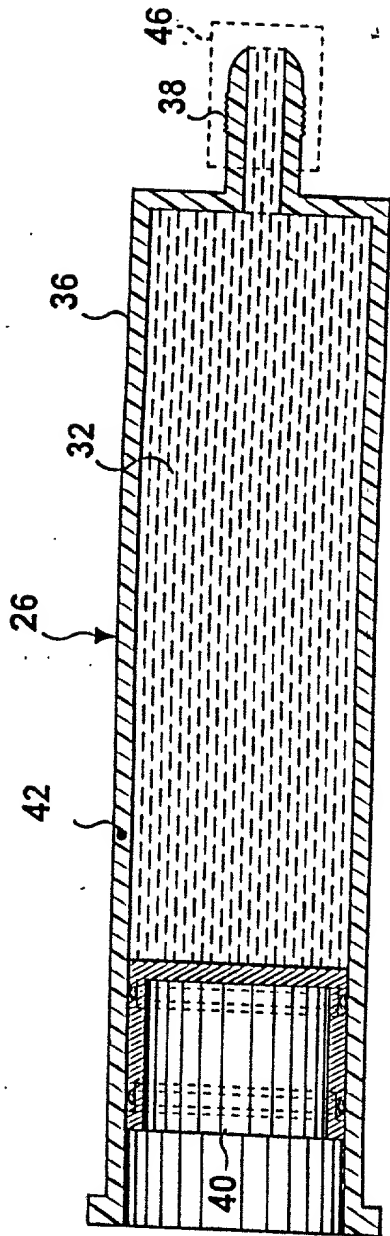


FIG 5

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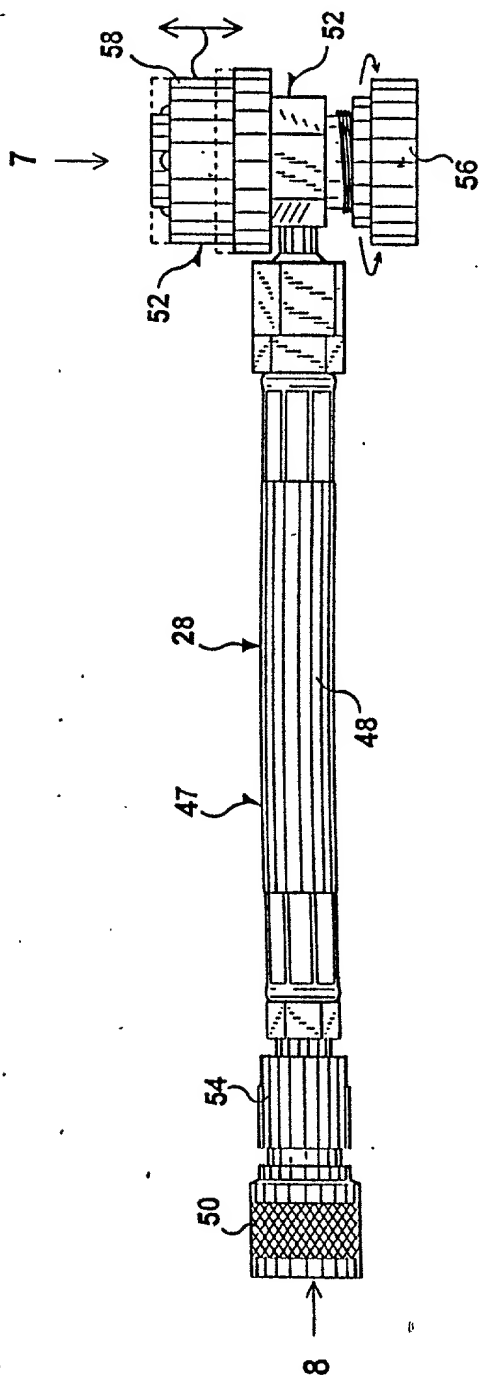
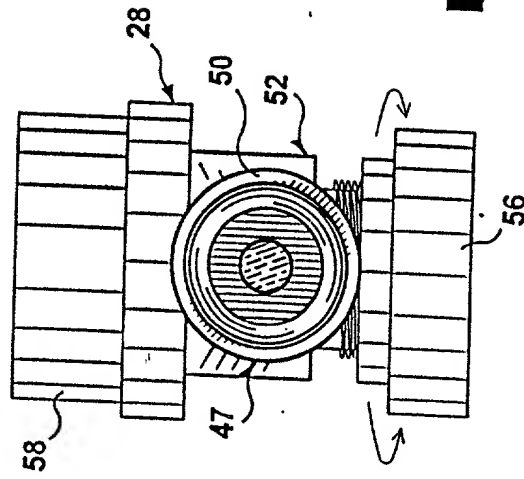
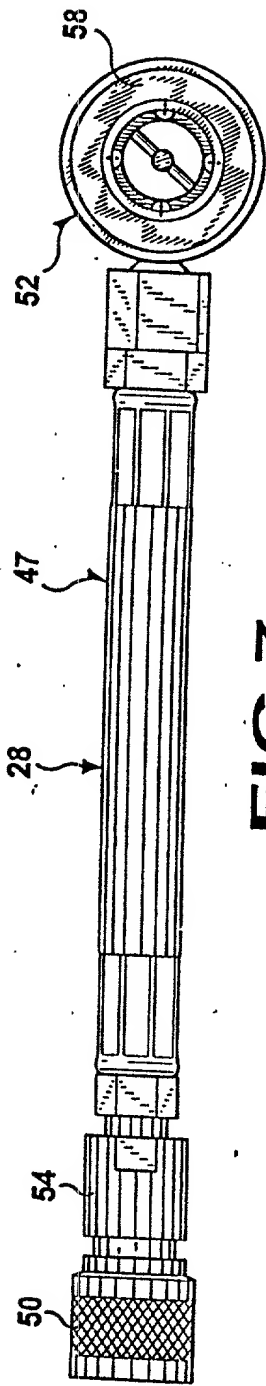


FIG 6

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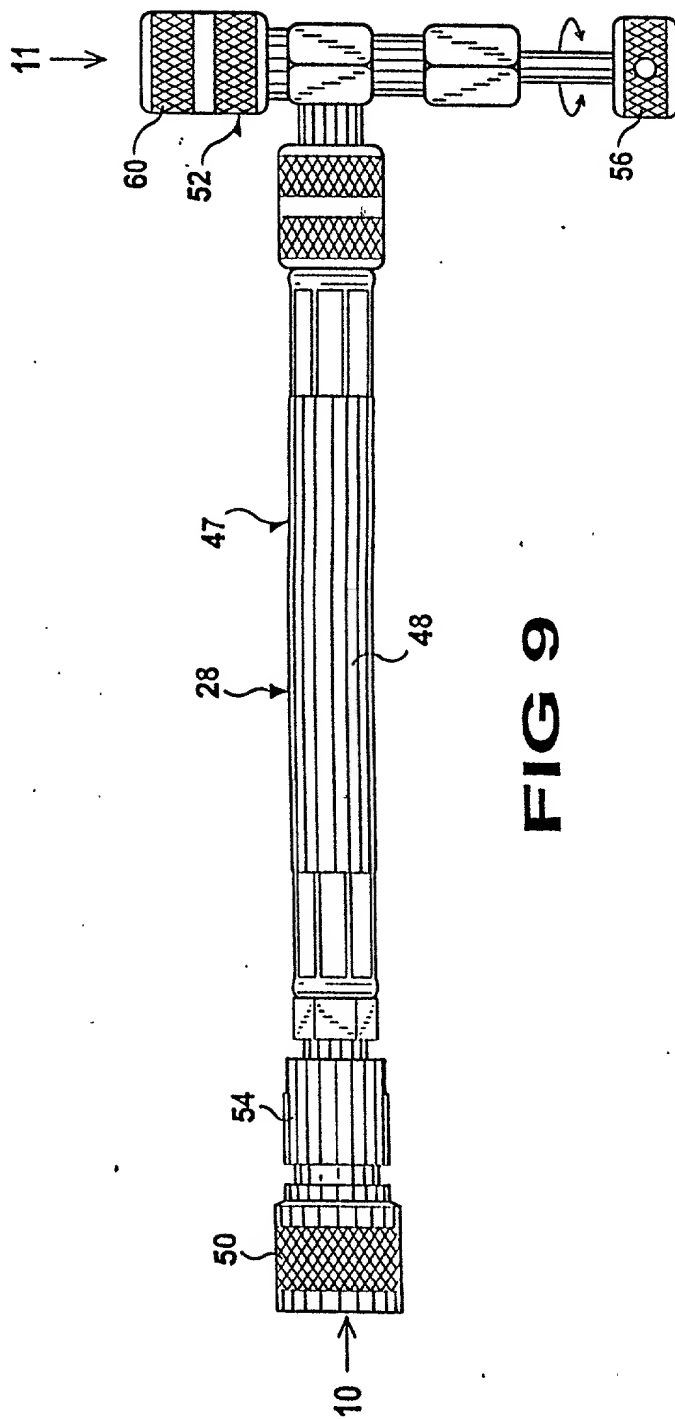


FIG 9

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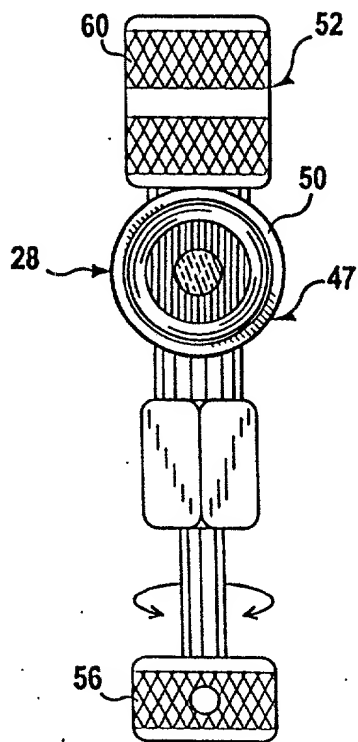


FIG 10

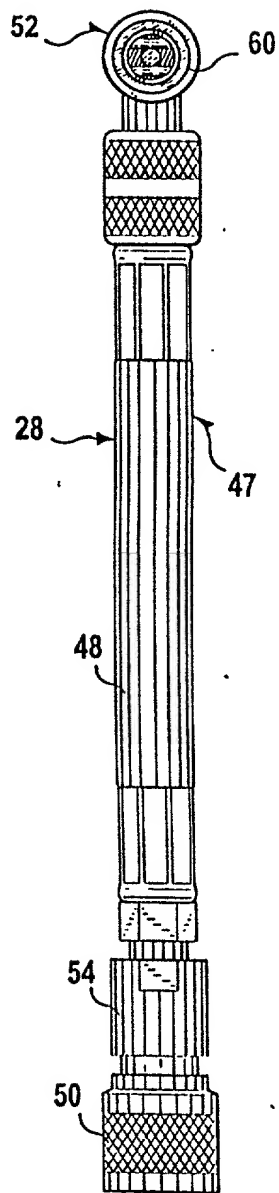


FIG 11

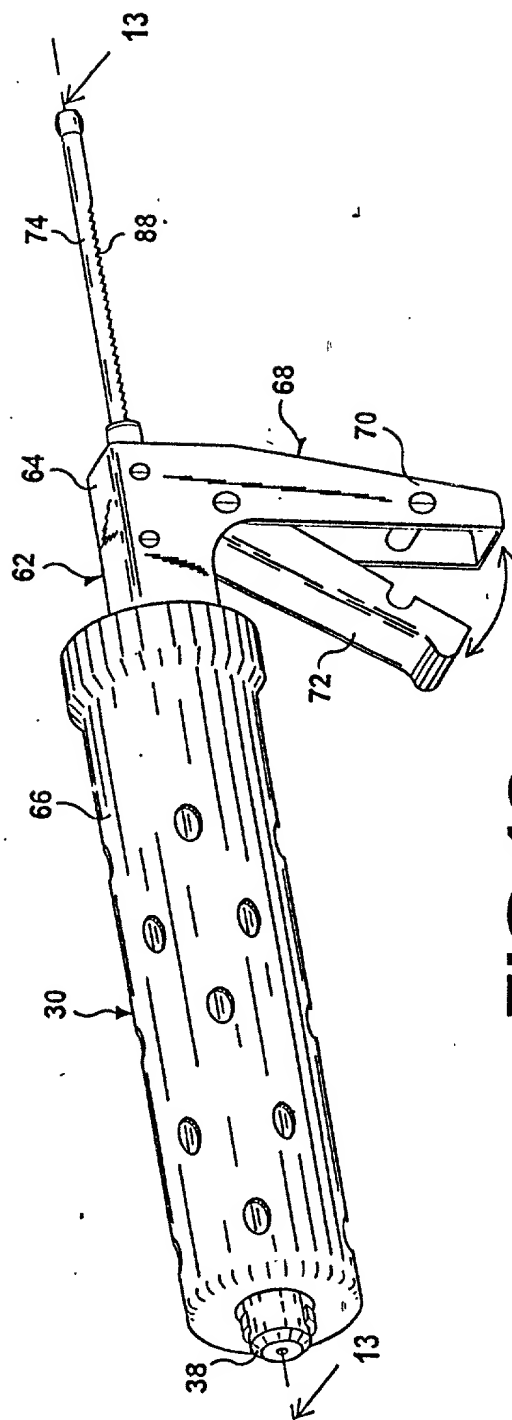


FIG 12

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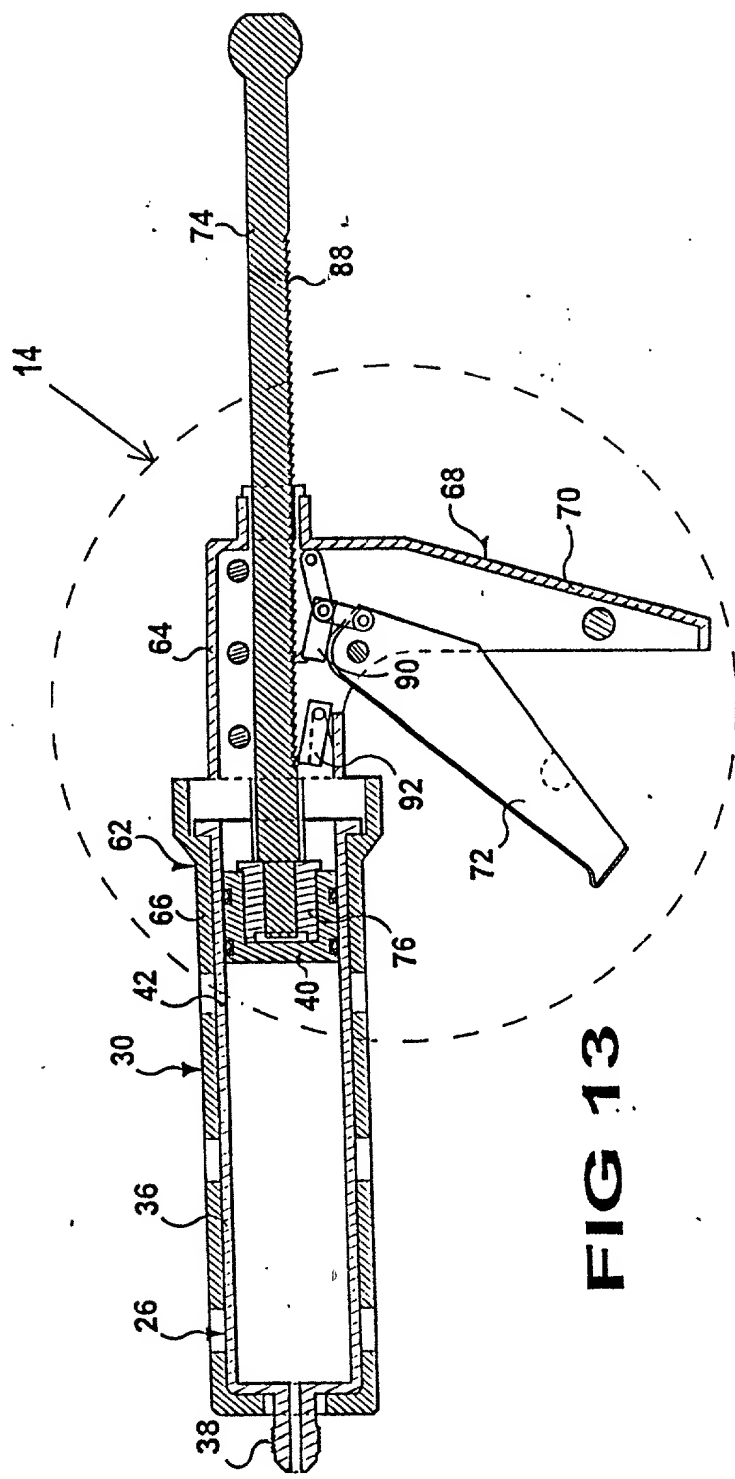
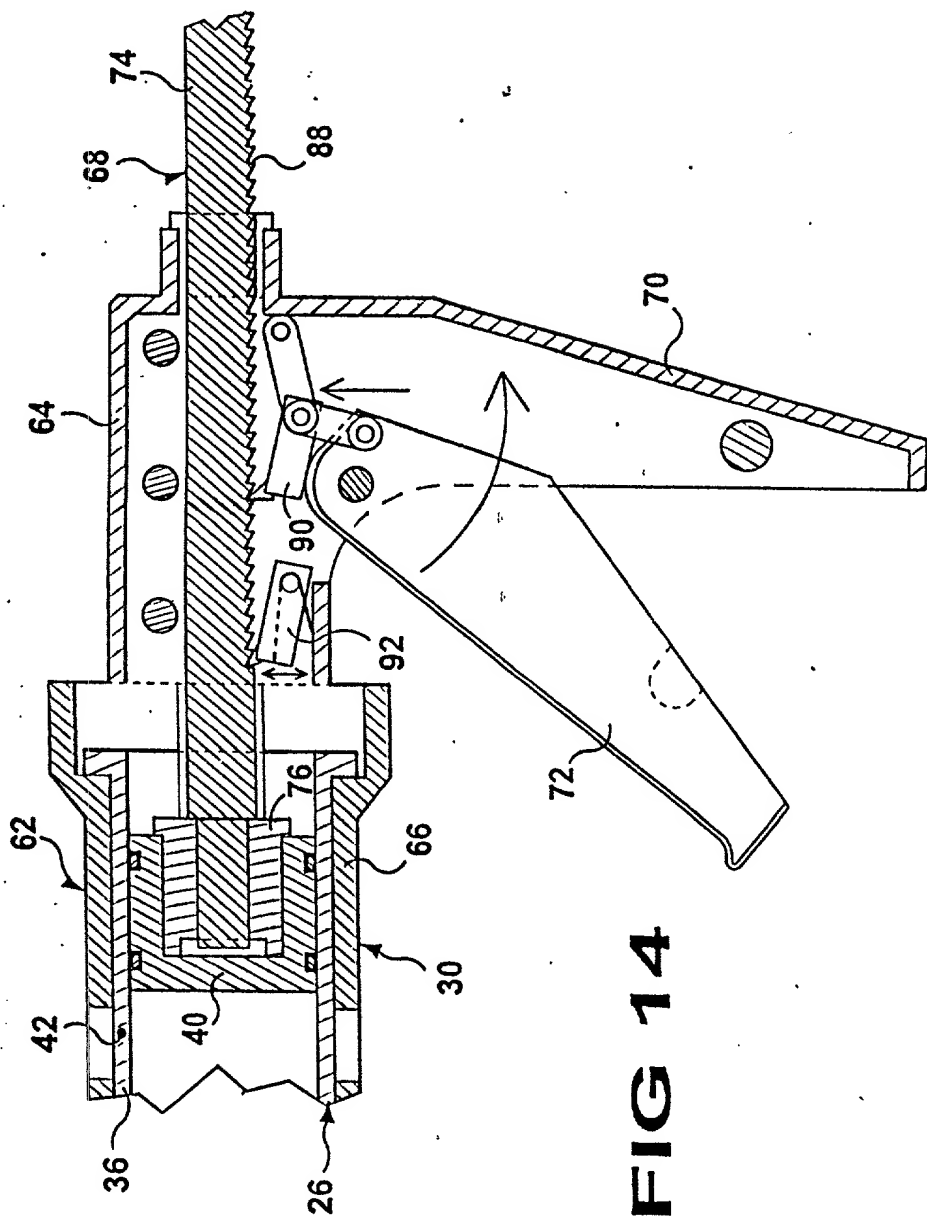
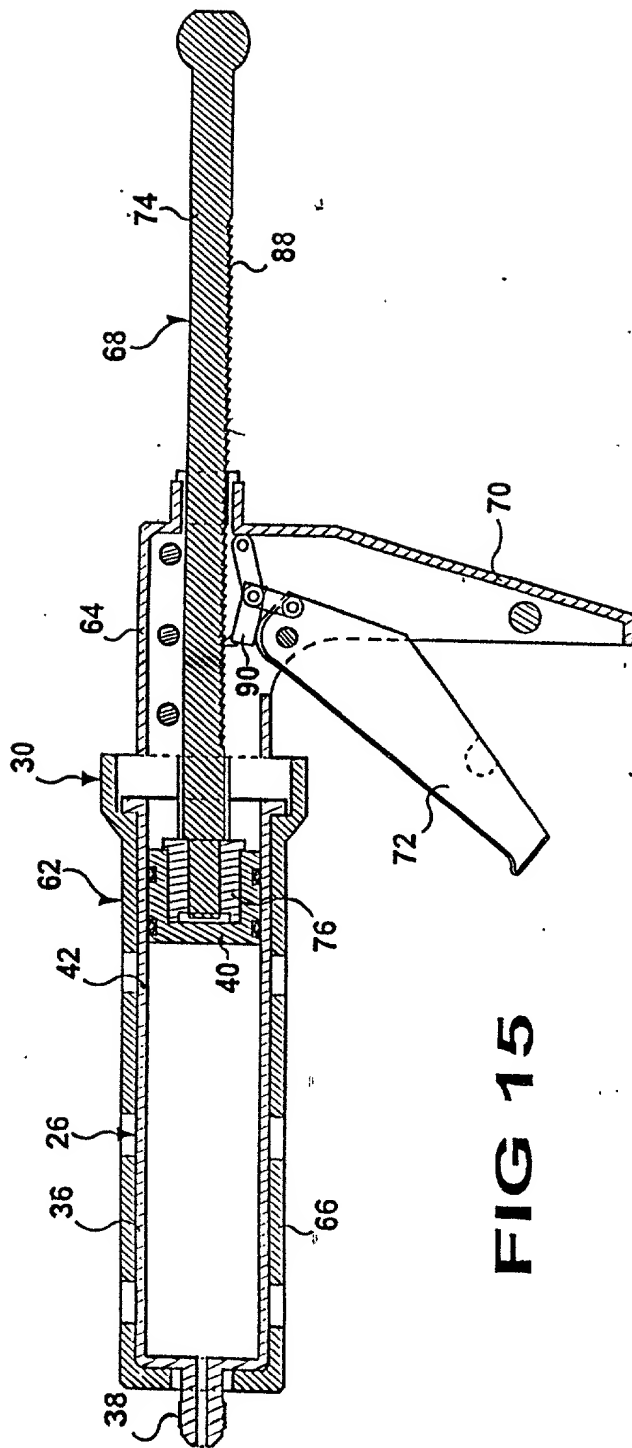


FIG 13





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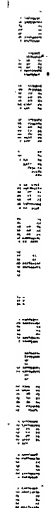


FIG 16

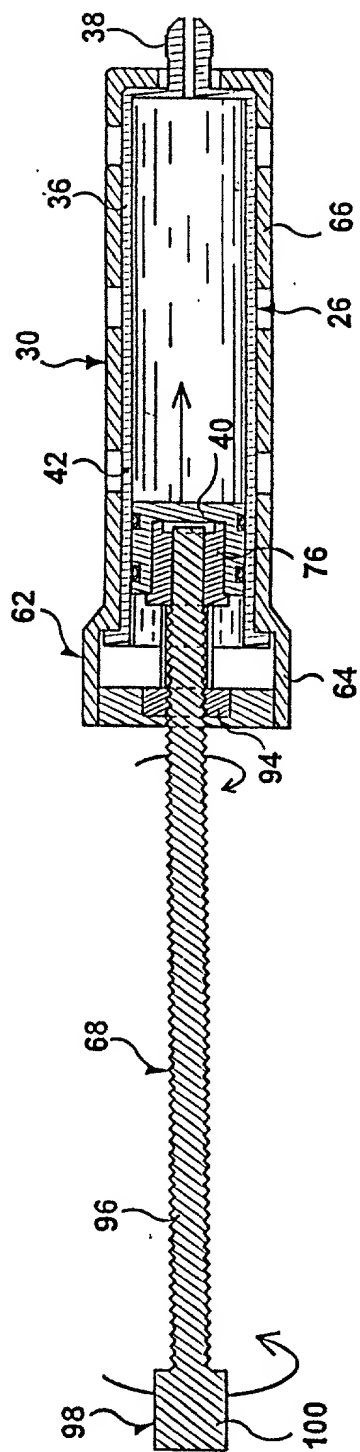


FIG 17

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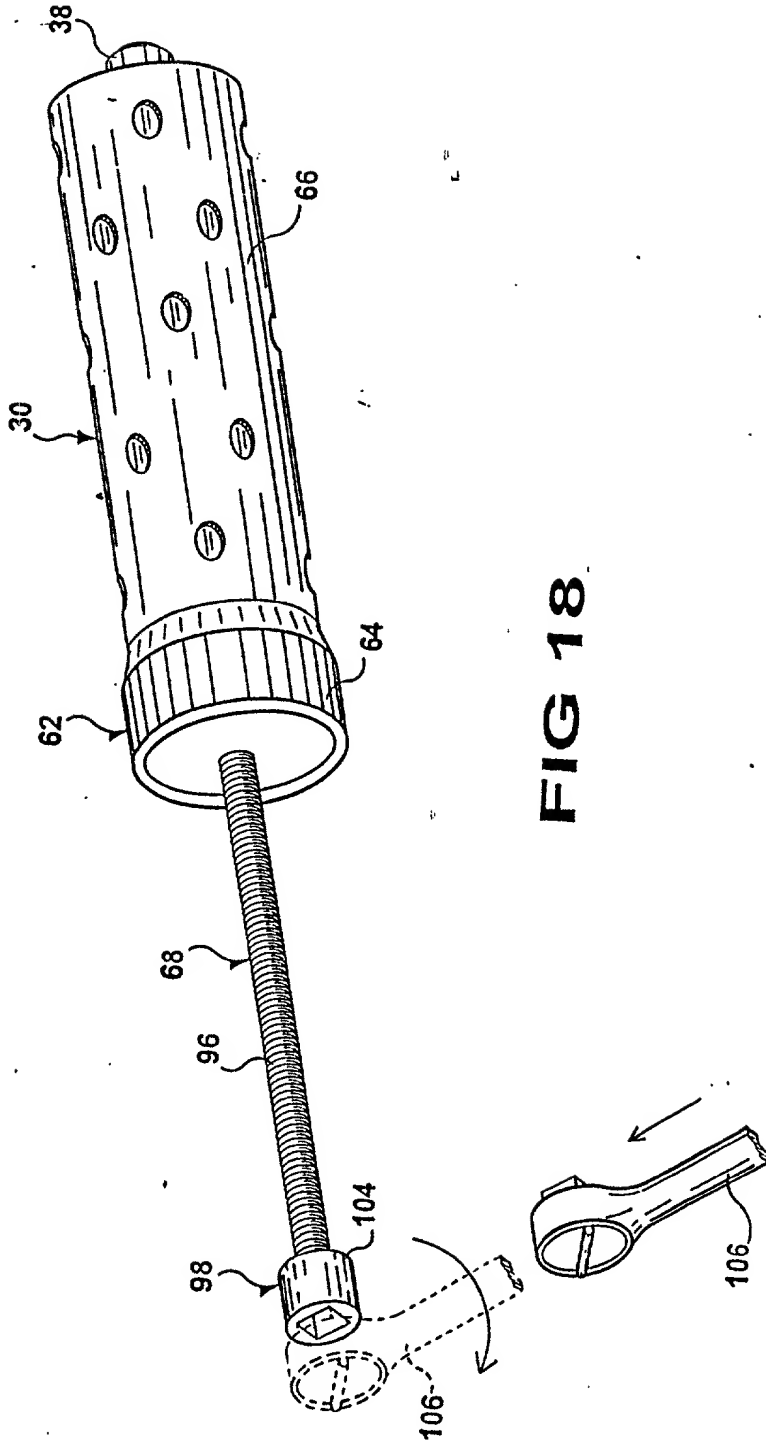


FIG 18

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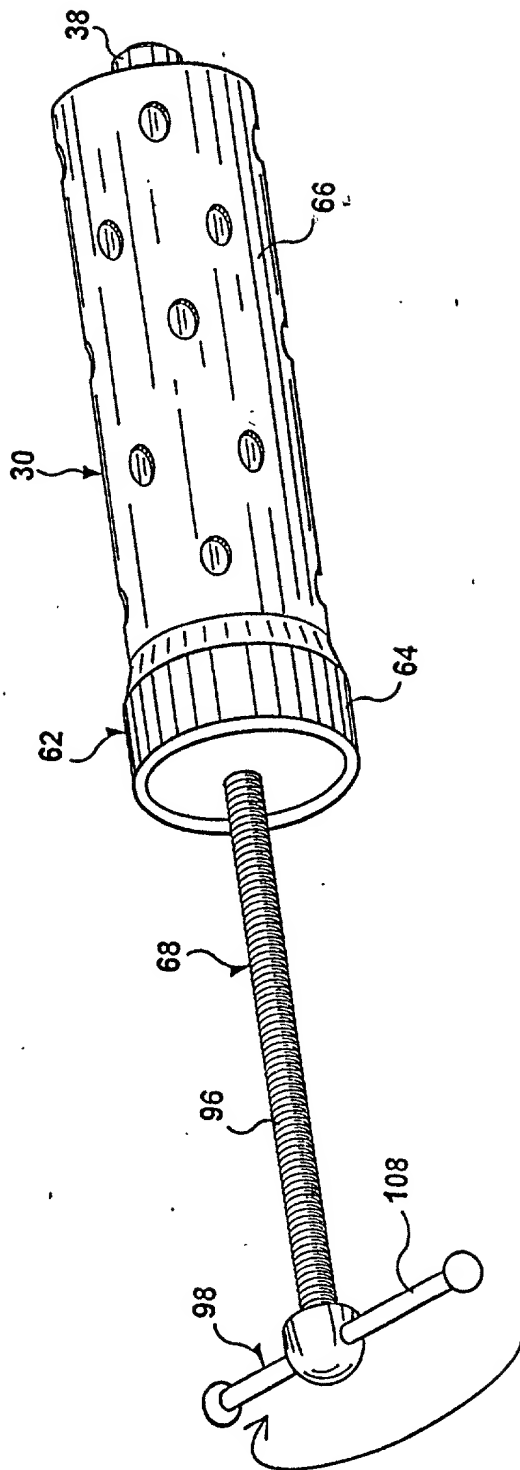


FIG 19

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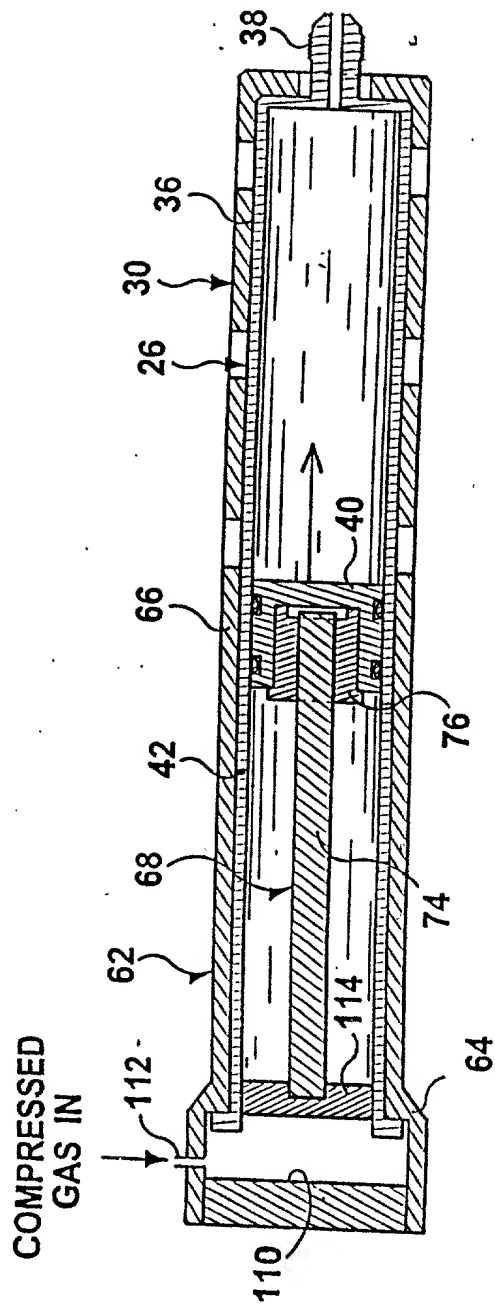
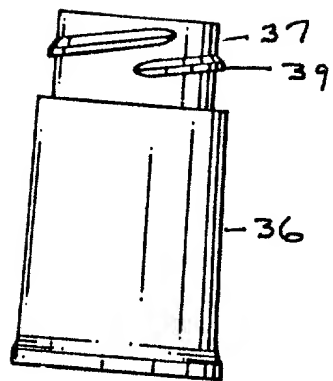


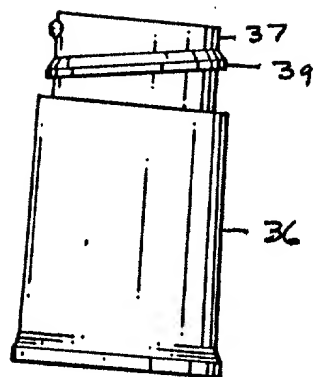
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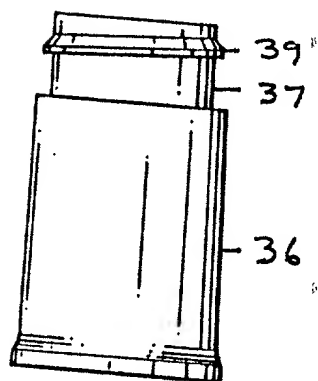
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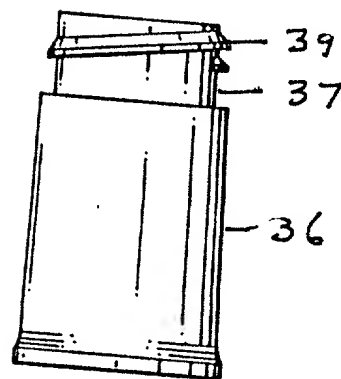
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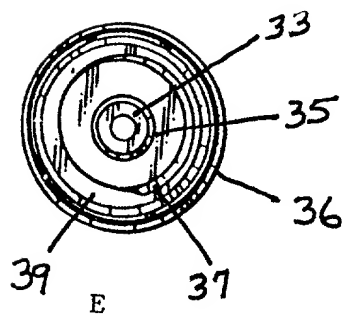
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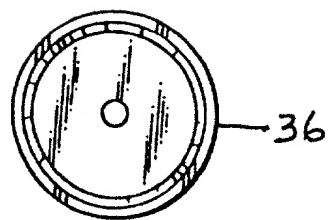
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D



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F

FIG 21

Docket No.
0111084/024

Declaration and Power of Attorney For Patent Application

English Language Declaration

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name,

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled

APPARATUS FOR DETECTING LEAKS IN A PRESSURIZED AIR CONDITIONING OR REFRIGERATION SYSTEM

the specification of which

(check one)

☒ is attached hereto.

☐ was filed on _____ as United States Application No. or PCT International Application Number _____ and was amended on _____ (if applicable)

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose to the United States Patent and Trademark Office all information known to me to be material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, Section 119(a)-(d) or Section 365(b) of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate, or Section 365(a) of any PCT International application which designated at least one country other than the United States, listed below and have also identified below, by checking the box, any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate or PCT International application having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed.

Prior Foreign Application(s)

Priority Not Claimed

_____ (Number)	_____ (Country)	_____ (Day/Month/Year Filed)	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____ (Number)	_____ (Country)	_____ (Day/Month/Year Filed)	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____ (Number)	_____ (Country)	_____ (Day/Month/Year Filed)	<input type="checkbox"/>

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U.S.C. Section 119(e) of any United States provisional application(s) listed below:

(Application Serial No.)

(Filing Date)

(Application Serial No.)

(Filing Date)

(Application Serial No.)

(Filing Date)

I hereby claim the benefit under 35 U. S. C. Section 120 of any United States application(s), or Section 365(c) of any PCT International application designating the United States, listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States or PCT International application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. Section 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose to the United States Patent and Trademark Office all information known to me to be material to patentability as defined in Title 37, C. F. R., Section 1.56 which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT International filing date of this application:

09/535,368

March 24, 2000

pending

(Application Serial No.)

(Filing Date)

(Status)
(patented, pending, abandoned)

(Application Serial No.)

(Filing Date)

(Status)
(patented, pending, abandoned)

(Application Serial No.)

(Filing Date)

(Status)
(patented, pending, abandoned)

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

POWER OF ATTORNEY: As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith. *(list name and registration number)*

Dante J. Picciano Reg. No. 33,543
 Adam H. Masia Reg. No. 35,602
 Timothy L. Harney Reg. No. 38,174

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Direct Telephone Calls to: *(name and telephone number)*
Dante J. Picciano 312-807-4446

Full name of sole or first inventor

Phil Trigiani

Sole or first inventor's signature

Date

APRIL 24/2002

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Citizenship

Canada

Post Office Address

1249 Greenoaks Drive

Mississauga, Ontario L5J 3A1, Canada

Full name of second inventor, if any

Second inventor's signature

Date

Residence

Citizenship

Post Office Address